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# HINTS

on

## *Lily* *Culture*



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★ MAY 18 1938 ★

U.S. Department of Agriculture

C. L. Shride

*Vashon, Wash.*

I RECEIVE many catalogs, so do you. Some of these are quite elaborate, well-illustrated, often in colors. I should like to send you a catalog containing detailed descriptions and pictures of all the Lilies I grow. If I did so, many of you would treasure it and some would not. I am sure I would not sell enough lilies to pay the printer. Instead, I have tried to make this pamphlet helpful. If the effort seems justified I will try another soon.

On the back pages you will find a list of the lilies I offer for sale. If you want more information about any of them I shall be glad to write to you. I have photographs of many of them.

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EXTRA copies are available. Send the names of any friends who might be interested.

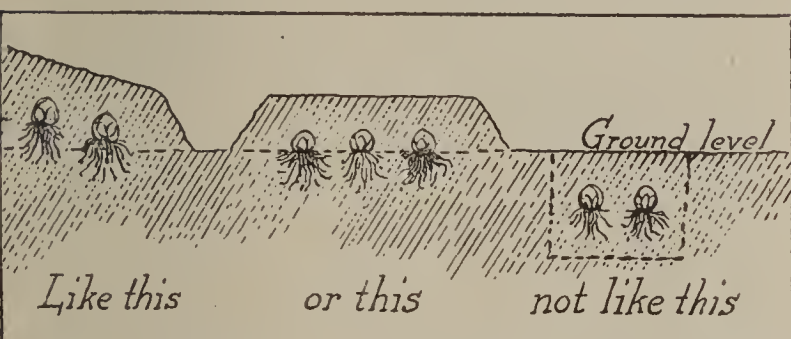
# HINTS ON LILY CULTURE



MANY Lilies will flourish where the common perennials do well. If your conditions are favorable you can just plant the bulbs and let them alone, but if grading operations or other causes have altered the natural soil some preparation is necessary for satisfactory results. Too many people are trying to make a garden on what the contractor dug out of the basement. It is usually better to cart this material away and make the garden fit the natural contour of the land.

## DRAINAGE

All Lilies like good drainage. Most of them will grow on a good sandy loam where water does not stand. Even the



so-called Bog Lilies want their bulbs above water level. If your garden does not slope enough for drainage, it is better to raise the lily bed than to dig a hole where stagnant water may damage the bulbs.

Sunlight is indispensable, but most of the species appreciate the shade of neighboring plants at least a part of the day. In the filtered sunshine of Puget Sound, many lilies do well in the open field, hence our commercial plantings. Loosely-growing shrubs or herbaceous plants shelter Lilies from destructive winds as well as shade the soil, thus checking evaporation and protecting the tender growth from spring frosts. Lilies planted too near a building usually suffer from a lack of water; the south side of a fence is better.



## PLANTING

If possible the ground should be prepared for Lilies the fall before planting. Frost and snow have a wonderful effect upon soil; and check the development of insect pests. Incorporation of leaf-mold will improve most soils; and with a heavy clay or light sandy soil such treatment is certainly indicated.

If bulbs are to be planted near vigorous shrubs or trees, a wooden box (capacity one bushel or more) like an apple box should be sunk and the bulbs planted in that. The boards will prevent the encroachment of the tree feeding roots until the Lilies are established. The bulbs may be surrounded by wire netting to prevent damage by mice or squirrels. The material sold as hardware cloth is about right. It comes in strips two feet wide, from which it is easy to make baskets eight inches wide with sides eight inches deep. If half-inch mesh is used, the bulbs may be planted in these buried baskets without hindering root growth.

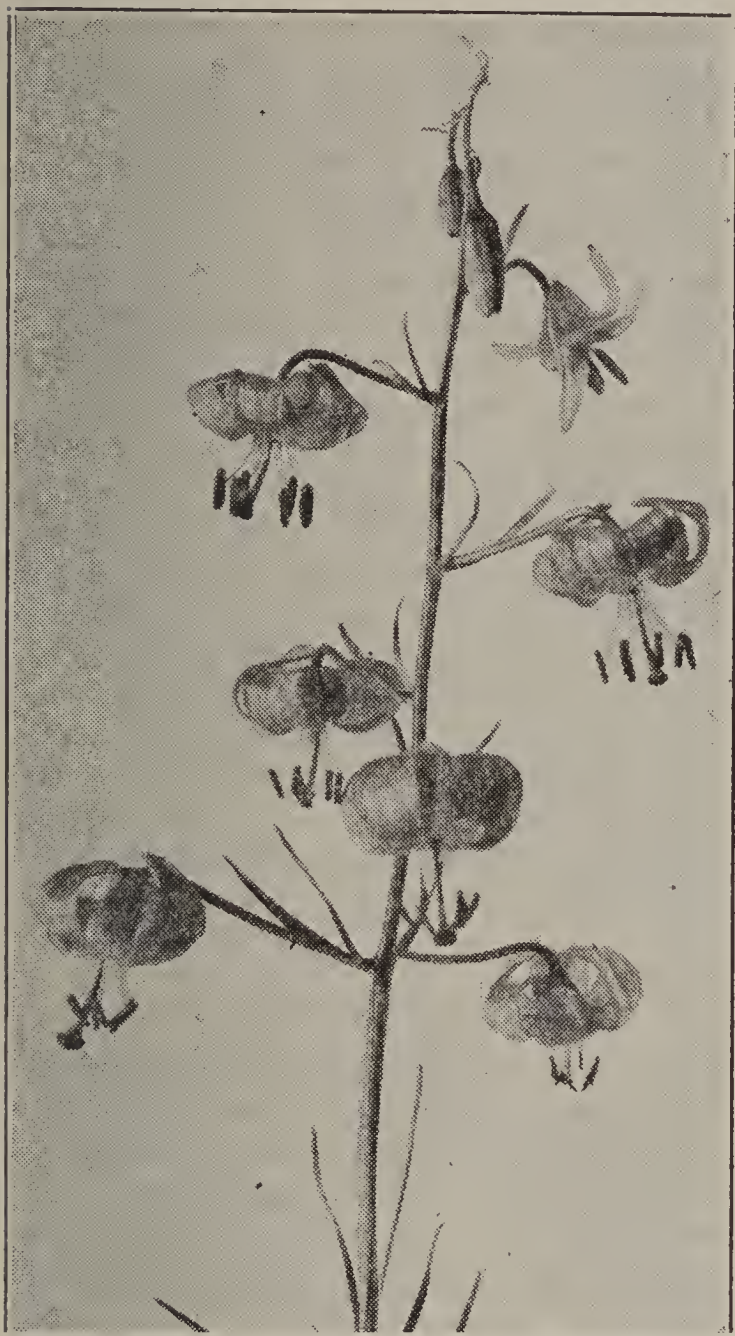
Plant Lilies with a spade, not a trowel. Dig up the ground for at least eighteen inches deep. Turn the good topsoil down where the roots will be. In "trenching" for Lilies or other plants, I like to put sods at the bottom of the bed. This is humus in its best form. It holds the moisture and feeds the plant. The various kinds of Lilies should be planted four to ten inches deep and will need as much more for root run.

Many of the Asiatic Lilies and some of the European and American species make roots on the flower stem, in addition to those on the base of the bulb. These are commonly referred to as "stem-rooting Lilies." In this classification are *auratum*, *speciosum*, *Henryi*, *regale*, *formosanum*, *tiger*, etc. Deeper planting is advised for these than for those that make roots from the base of the bulb only. The latter are called "base-rooting" and include *candidum*, *pumilum*, *pardalinum*, *Martagon* and others. If in doubt ask your nurseryman when you buy bulbs. Perhaps the safest rule is, "Cover to a depth equal to three times the dia-

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meter of the **adult** bulb." As *pumilum* (*tenuifolium*) grows to only a little over an inch in diameter, it should be covered with three or four inches of soil, while *auratum* or *Henryi* may



**L. *Npumilum* (syn. *L. tenuifolium*)**

### LEAVE ROOTS ON

be planted ten inches deep. Bulbs in a light soil should be a little deeper than if the soil is heavy.

If your bulb has roots on, as it should have, give them the same care you would give tree roots. A hole having been dug a little deeper than the bulb is to be planted, place an inch of sand in the bottom; set the bulb on this and surround it with the same thickness of sand. Mark its position with a stake and fill the hole with loam, labeling it properly. Work the ground carefully so the sprouting flower-stem will not be injured. Some Lil-

ies, like *Henryi*, will show growth in time to be caught by late frosts; others are slower to appear. My *myriophyllum* showed above the ground last Spring on June twentieth, and I have known *L. auratum* to stay dormant two years making roots, and growing plump, before sending any growth above ground.

Lilies should be watered only until flowering. Keep the ground moist and cool in Summer with a mulch of leaf-mold or peatmoss, which should be put on at the advent of hot weather—probably June. Remove the mulch when Fall rains come; and after the ground freezes, mulch again to prevent damage from alternate freezing and thawing. Well-rotted manure makes a good winter mulch for most Lilies. Remove the mulch in the Spring before growing weather comes, as spring mulch encourages early growth which may get frost-bitten. The temperature next to a straw mulch may be five or six degrees F. cooler than the surface of unmulched soil nearby. That much difference may be destructive.

### FERTILIZE CAREFULLY

Do not allow raw fertilizer to come in contact with lily bulbs. Bonemeal is safe for use in early Spring. If a so-called balanced plant food is used, one analyzing high in phosphorus and potassium is preferable. I use a 3-10-10 formula. Apply small quantities frequently and work into the soil before watering. It is better to fertilize the ground the year before the Lilies are planted. Remove and burn withered flowers. Allowing Lilies to bear seed reduces the next year's flowering. "Do not allow the Lily to bloom at all the first year," would be better advice but I know better than to offer it. Few gardeners have the fortitude required to pinch all the buds off a new plant. I made remarks similar to this before a Flower Club a few years ago, and a listener said, "I know that is true. I planted a Gold-banded Lily (*L. auratum*) a few years ago. It did well, but just before it bloomed some children playing around it broke the stem;



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I thought it would die, but it came up the next Spring better than before. Then a neighbor's horse bit the top off before it bloomed, but this year it bloomed and it is the most beautiful thing I ever saw." I do not recommend this exact treatment for all Lilies, but it is an idea.

Do not transplant a Lily when it is doing well. Those Lilies that multiply rapidly, like *pardalinum*, may be dug every three or four years for division. I have known others to do well for as long as fifteen years undisturbed.

The species *formosanum* and *longiflorum* need protection during the winter. The ground should be kept from freezing as deep as the bulb is planted. All other Lilies usually in commerce are hardy here, and if they suffer damage the cause is something other than low temperature. A few tender Lilies from southern Asia are not considered, as they are seldom catalogued.

—From Flowers and Gardens.

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THE MOST popular Lily today is *L. formosanum* (*Philippinense formosanum*.) I have more than a dozen in bloom at this writing, October 30. They have been blooming since the middle of August. It is all that is claimed for it except one thing. I will not agree that it is hardy. It will stand freezing, and if your idea of a hardy plant is one that withstands frost, then it is. Mine went through the last Winter without damage, although unprotected. The low temperature was 13 degrees F. The ground froze deeper than the bulbs were planted and I have word from Boston and New York that this Lily has wintered there without mulching. On the other hand, I have lost whole plantings at temperatures above zero. The other Lilies (except *longiflorum* and *sulphureum*) withstand below-zero temperatures. These exceptions should be mulched heavily or taken up in the Fall if you expect low temperatures.

## Lilies From Seed

RAISING Lilies from seed interests many people. It is not as simple as a crop of carrots or sweet peas, although sometimes the results are amazing. Much experimental work needs to be done regarding the time of germination. This time may vary from three weeks to three years, and may depend upon the season of planting. Some should be planted in the Fall while others must wait until Spring. Some, if planted in the Fall, will germinate the following Spring and remain underground all the first year to make top growth the second Spring. Generally speaking, fresh seed is best, although I have had best results from two-year-old seed of *L. Henryi* and *L. japonicum* (*Krameri*).

I recommend Fall planting for *auratum*, *Bolanderi*, *canadense*, *chalcedonicum*, *aurantiacum* (*croceum*), *columbianum*, *giganteum*, *Kelloggi*, *Martagon* (and varieties) *Monadelphum*, *pardalinum*, *Parryi*, *parvum*, *pomponium*, *Roezli*, *superbum* *Washingtonianum* and others less common. The following should be planted in the Spring or so late in the fall that they will not germinate before the ground freezes. I prefer March or early April planting: *amabile*, *cernuum*, *concolor*, *Davidi*, *Henryi*, *longiflorum*, *Maximowiczii*, *pumilum*, (syn. *tenuifolium*) *Golden Gleam*, *regale*, *Sargentiae*, *speciosum*, *Wardii* and *Willmottiae*. *Martagon* will some times give good results from Spring planting but is more likely to germinate and remain underground for a year. *Henryi* takes a long time to germinate and may be profitably planted in the Fall. If your ground is not ready when Winter comes stratify in wet sand and let freeze, then plant when you can work the ground.

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A NEIGHBOR has about 200 bulbs of double tiger to sell. This is the only double lily worth growing and good, home-grown bulbs are scarce. Good bulbs are priced at 35c or \$3.50 per dozen. Send orders to me.

## Get Them Young

IF YOU have difficulty establishing certain lilies, try planting small bulbs not yet ready to bloom. Then the bulb will not be required to establish itself in its new home and at the same time support the crop started the previous year while in more favorable surroundings. If some buds appear in spite of your purchasing small bulbs, pick them off. Among others this applies to Humbolti, Parryi, monadelphum, testaceum and Washingtonianum. Humbolti and monadelphum often take care of this themselves by letting the stalk die before blooming, and will occasionally do this two or three years before producing flowers. Otherwise it may produce a full head of flowers and perish. I have found this trait so marked in monadelphum that I purposely ship small bulbs that I think will not bloom. The customer may scold because small bulbs are sent, but, if it seems healthy, will not disturb it and will get results the next year; while if the top dies back early the bulb may be destroyed because disease is suspected.

*L. giganteum himilaicum* should never be transplanted the year before it is expected to bloom. This will be about six years from seed. The knowing nurseryman will fill your orders with bulbs four years old to bloom two or three years later. The foliage of this lily is quite ornamental and in due time it produces a flower stalk which blooms magnificently and then dies. Small bulbs are left at the base of the flower stalk which should be reset and allowed to develop in their permanent location.

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The illustration on the cover is *L. Willmottiae*. A four-year-old bulb produced a head of sixteen blooms. After making the photograph I left the flower stalk in a vase of water and the last bloom shattered after three weeks. Now there are two pods of ripe seed. This lily is perfectly hardy. It blooms with regale.

## How Big?

THE size of a lily bulb does not always indicate its flowering qualities. It is true that a very small bulb is not expected to bloom and a large one should. And by that I do not mean the different forms of bulb peculiar to the different species; although that is an interesting subject. A bulb of *L. cernuum* or *pumilum* one-half inch in diameter may bloom beautifully, while a *giganteum* three inches across may not bloom at all.

As most of you know, a lily forms the flower bud a year previous to blooming. Cut a lily bulb through the growing point and next year's flower bud may be seen. Perhaps with the aid of a magnifying glass and a little stain the buds may be counted. Following a favorable growing season, bulbs less than a half an inch in diameter of some of the quickly maturing species may bloom freely. Another year following poor cultivation, drouth or other adverse conditions the same size bulbs may not flower at all. I have counted 24 blooms on a bulb that measured eight inches in circumference but due to lack of cultivation and the strain of bearing thoses blossoms and the resulting seed crop it bore fewer blooms the next year.

A bulb grower soon learns to judge the potential flowering power of his bulbs and will not send out a bulb that he thinks will not flower. However, many bulbs are dug after the stalks have died and the size of the bulb is the only measure of its possibilities. Sometimes a mole working under a bulb disturbs it and checks development. Perhaps botrytis strikes the plant just when the leaves are needed to feed the bulb. Or in weeding a flower stalk may be pulled or broken off. This stops development at once, but at digging time the bulb may look like its neighbors and go to market with them.

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I WANT to sell 800 mixed Darwin tulips. 40 for \$1.00 or 100 for \$2.25, prepaid with Lilies.



## A Rare Lily

**L** OCCIDENTALE bloomed for me the first time this year. I like it and think it deserves a wider use. The plant resembles *L. Roezlii* but has a better flower. It is a turk's-cap Lily, colored deep orange at the base of the petals with small spots. This orange extends toward the tip of the petal along the midrib. Tips of petals are deep red and this color extends along the margins toward the base. Such arrangement is quite distinct from that of *pardalinum* and *Roezlii* in which the red tips fade more or less to merge with the orange base. It is a native of a very limited region in California. I do not know how hardy it is but other Californian lilies are quite hardy. Being found at high altitudes they are accustomed to ice and snow.

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**O**NE wonders why such hardy species as *L. regale* suffers winter loss here where the temperature seldom reaches as low as zero. One of my neighbors reported about sixty per cent loss last year and the most plausible explanation of it is that it is the thawing rather than the freezing that does the damage. First the ground freezes deeper than the bulb is planted; then the top thaws and if the ground is about level the top of the bulb is in stagnant water and soon rots. The frozen soil beneath prevents drainage. Because my ground is slightly rolling I have not had this trouble.

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## Wet or Dry?

**D**O NOT let your lily bulbs go into the winter dry. When you plant them or—in the case of an established planting—if the ground is dry, water them well before the ground freezes. Soak the roots. Such warning is unnecessary here on Puget Sound but correspondents in different sections of the country where dry Fall weather is the rule have written that freezing while dry has caused the loss of many bulbs.

## A Bog Lily

THERE are several Lilies that are classed as swamp or bog lilies but the only one I know that will thrive in such situations is *L. Roezlii*. I am told by a man who has studied it in its native haunts that this Lily is often under water six months or more at a time, then the water dries up and the soil suffers the other extreme. Through it all the lily flourishes. I first obtained this lily about ten years ago. I planted it where the lily pool overflowed—perfect drainage with lots of water. The bulbs flourished and propagated wonderfully. It became necessary to move them and they have never done as well since. The tips of the petals of the type plant are orange. There is also a crimson form that is quite good. It blooms at the same time as the regale here.

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## Hybrid Lilies

THE LATE Dr. David Griffiths, in charge of bulb investigations at the United States Department of Agriculture's Bulb Station at Bellingham, Washington, developed several hybrid Lilies and sent stock to Northwest growers. At least five of these hybrids are now offered for sale. They are Douglas Ingram, Kulshan, Sacajawea, Shuksan and Star of Oregon.

Star of Oregon resembles *Humbolti magnificum* and Shuksan is quite like the species *Humbolti*. But in each case the hybrid is of easier culture than the parent species. If you failed to keep *L. Humbolti*, try the hybrids. Douglas Ingram has a red coloring inherited from the pollen parent *L. pardalinum*. It is the most prolific of the lot. Sacajawea is smaller than Star of Oregon. Kulshan is a distinct break. It is basically a rich cadmium color and closely covered with small maroon dots. The help at the Bulb Station named it "Freckles."

I have some hand colored photographs of Star of Oregon that I will send to anyone who will ask for one.

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**T**HIS was a poor year for seed, especially on the early blooming Lilies. There was too much rain at blooming time. I have seed of the following and offer it as long as the supply lasts. It is the same as I sow but none is guaranteed to grow. The price is 25c for large packets, commonly known as trade packets, or 10 smaller packets for \$1.00.

Cernuum, columbianum, davuricum, Henryi Martagon, Martagon album, Maximowiczii, Philippinense formosanum, regale, Sulphur-gale, superbum, pumilum (tenuifolium), Washingtonianum purpureum, Willmottiae, and the following hybrids: pardalinum X Humbolti, and this hybrid crossed with Parryi, Maximowiczii X Willmottiae.

I also have imported seed of auratum and japonicum at the same price.

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**I** HAVE a few of the formosanum Pricei—the dwarf variety. It blooms about a month earlier than the tall growing one and is said to be hardier. I have not grown it long enough to lose any by freezing yet so I can't say. It is not to be compared with Wilson's variety as a garden subject, but if you want a low-growing Lily of that description it is quite satisfactory. Plant both.

## List of Prices

I OFFER the following Lily bulbs for sale. These are good bulbs, freshly dug, packed with the roots on and shipped to you prepaid. Spring orders should be in hand by March 1. Usually our Spring starts early and bulbs must be dug early or they will be growing too much to transplant well.

	Each	Dozen
Amabile .....	.25	\$2.50
Bulbiferum .....	.25	2.50
Canadense .....	.25	2.50
Candidum (August only) same price as regale		
Columbianum .....	.20	2.00
Concolor .....	.20	2.00
Croceum .....	.25	2.50
Dauricum (Davuricum) ....	.25	2.50
Douglass Ingram (Griffith's hybrid) .....	2.00	
Formosanum Wilson's var	.25	2.50
Formosanum Price's var	.25	2.50
Giganteum Himilaicum	2.00	
Grayi .....	.35	3.50
Henryi .....	.20	2.00
Henryi large .....	.35	3.50
Henryi extra large .....	.60	6.00
Humbolti .....	.60	6.00
Humbolti magnificum ....	.60	6.00
Kulshan (Griffith's hybrid) .....	1.50	
Longiflorum .....	.25	2.50
Martagon .....	.35	3.50
var. album .....	.50	5.00
Maximowiczii .....	.30	3.00
Wada's var. ....	.50	5.00
Occidentale .....	.75	7.50
Pardalinum .....	.20	2.00
var Giant Red .....	.20	2.00



# List of Prices

	Each	Dozen
Parryi .....	.50	5.00
Parvum .....	.50	5.00
Philippinense var. formosanum .....	.25	2.50
Princeps (see Sar-gale)		
Pyrenaicum .....	.75	7.50
Regale (3 small bulbs) ....	.40	<del>4.00</del> 13
Regale large .....	.35	3.50
Regale extra large .....	.60	6.00
Roezlii .....	.25	2.50
Roezlii crimson var. same price		
Sacajawea (Griffith's hybrid .....	2.00	
Scovitzianum (small) ....	.75	
Scovitzianum (large) .....	1.50	
Shuksan (Griffith's hybrid .....	1.00	
large bulbs .....	2.00	
Speciosum var. rubrum	.35	3.50
Star of Oregon (Griffith's hybrid) .....	1.00	
large bulbs .....	2.00	
Sulphureum—small .....	.50	5.00
Sar-gale hybrid .....	.50	
Superbum .....	.25	2.50
Tenuifolium (3 bulbs) ....	.40	1.50
Tenuifolium—small .....		1.00
Testaceum .....	1.00	10.00
Tiger var. fortunei, dwarf Malmo or Splendens ....	.20	2.00
Umbellatum var. grandiflora (erectum or Sappho same price) .....	.25	2.50
Washingtonianum purpureum .....	.50	5.00
Willmottiae—small .....	.30	3.00
Large .....	.50	5.00

Send orders to  
C. L. SHRIDE, Vashon, Wash.

